

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES REVIEWS

InfoRetriever 2004. InfoPOEM, 2 Boars Head Place, Suite 105, Charlottesville, VA; 22903; 877.MED.POEM (877.633.7636); info@info poems.com; <http://www.info poems.com>; subscription, \$249; institutional site license, consortia, and residency program discounts available; free trials available via the Web.

The InfoRetriever clinical awareness system, using evidence-based medical research geared for the primary care practitioner, has now been issued using the very popular Palm operating system (OS). An earlier review [1] of the Pocket PC version noted the many excellent features of this easy-to-use system. *Griffith's 5 Minute Clinical Consult* has now been fully integrated into the product while maintaining many of the unique features of the earlier version. The distinguishing feature of this clinical decision support tool is the integration of synopses of the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, clinical practice guidelines, and evidence-based research articles from more than 100 medical journals into the product. This heavy reliance on research that benefits the clinical practitioner remains this product's strongest feature.

InfoRetriever was founded by family practitioners with the idea of delivering medical information based on the best available clinical evidence to the primary care provider at the point of care. Handheld computers offer the best promise of achieving the ideal of providing health care professionals with the most relevant and valid information when and where they need it to care for their patients. A recent randomized controlled trial published in *BMJ* [2] found that use of InfoRetriever with medical students at the University of Hong Kong increased current and future use of evidence and boosted students' confidence in clinical decision making. With the online, desktop, and handheld versions of InfoRetriever working with the daily email updates of DailyPOEMs (Patient-Oriented Evidence that

Matters), busy clinicians can be assured of remaining on top of new, clinically applicable evidence.

This review will concentrate on the new version of this product for the Palm OS while noting the differences between it and the other versions of the product. First, the handheld version does require a large amount of memory to operate. A Palm or Palm-clone with a memory expansion slot is necessary, because the program runs from external memory. Using a very basic Palm m130 to run the program, the reviewer found that it took about twenty seconds to retrieve the largest reports and only a couple of seconds to retrieve less complex information. Downloading and installing this product is simple and quick. Instructions are clear and easy to follow. Customer support service is available via email or a toll-free number, Mondays to Fridays.

The handheld, Web, and desktop versions present similar search screens to the user. Users can search by text word, body system, or diagnosis or search a particular tool like the 5-Minute Clinical Consult or practice guidelines. The desktop and Web versions include links to patient-education handouts produced by the American Academy of Family Practitioners. Alternative and complementary medicine is integrated into search results, when evidence-based reports are available. Thousands of decision helpers like clinical decision rules, diagnostic test calculators, history-and-physical-exam calculators, and numbers-needed-to-treat calculators are integrated into all versions of the product. Plugging in various parameters could allow practitioners to advise patients of steps they can take to lower their risk of serious disease progression. The ancillary items like the ICD 9 lookup or E/M coding wizard add value for the busy clinicians. The drug data are useful but basic and do not include adverse effects or interactions, which is a definite drawback. The photo gallery, while clear and useful on the Web or desktop versions is understandably less

useable on the handheld. Frustratingly, the full name of some of the illustrations could not be displayed on the handheld when using the photo gallery. The desktop and Web versions of InfoRetriever include a guided Internet search feature allowing the user to search MEDLINE or selected Internet sites for more information. Each DailyPOEM incorporated in the desktop software includes a link to the PubMed citation. Institutional subscribers can use LinkOut to display the local library's print holdings and electronic full-text holdings in PubMed.

For the librarian, the DailyPOEMs feature of the subscription can be especially valuable. Delivered via email Monday through Friday or monthly, if desired, these synopses of new clinically relevant evidence drawn from 121 journals are succinct and clearly written. Each POEM is graded for validity and includes a "bottom line" one- or two-sentence summary. Forwarding these to clinicians with particular interest in the topic with a note that the library subscribes to the journal mentioned or that the library can get the report through interlibrary loan can be a valuable way of promoting the library's collection and services. They are also ideal to post to a bulletin board. Full text of the DailyPOEMs are incorporated into each new release of the software. The reviewer found DailyPOEMs issued in December already incorporated into the 2004 version of both handheld and desktop software.

An increasing numbers of products are available for personal digital assistants, including versions of many of the popular basic medical texts, clinical calculators, and drug guides, which can aid clinicians in their practice. The evidence-based feature of this product makes it stand out from the rest. Integrating calculators, a primary care standard text, and a rudimentary drug database into one product with recent clinical evidence makes this product uniquely convenient and useable. If supplemented with a comprehensive drug guide, Info-

Retriever promises to offer clinicians the information needed at the bedside to ensure the best possible care for their patients. The desktop version can be loaded onto office computers, and Web access (with login and password) allows clinicians to carry evidence-based clinical decision tools with them to any setting.

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References

1. HOWSE D. InfoRetriever 3.2 for Pocket PC [review]. *J Med Libr Assoc* 2002 Jan;90(1):121-2.
2. LEUNG GM, JOHNSTON JM, TIN KY, WONG IOL, HO LM, LAM WWT, LAM TH. Randomized controlled trial of clinical decision support tools to improve learning of evidence based medicine in medical students. *BMJ* 2003 Nov 8;327(7423):1090-3.

The National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN). National Comprehensive Cancer Network, 500 Old York Road, Suite 250, Jenkintown, PA 19046; 888.909.NCCN (6226); 215.690.0300; fax, 215.690.0280; <http://www.nccn.org>; free Website; guidelines available on CD-ROM.

Nineteen hospitals make up the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN). The program began in 1995 "to develop a comprehensive set of diagnostic, treatment, and supportive care guidelines." The guidelines are designed to guide medical decision making in cancer care. Forty-five panels cover 95% of "tumors encountered in oncology practices." More than 600 clinicians and researchers have compiled "the best evidence" in drawing up the recommendations. Users must read a disclaimer and agree (by clicking a button) to the intended use of the guidelines before being allowed to view them. Health care professionals can re-

quest the guidelines on CD. A CD is currently available from a symposium on multiple myeloma.

Each guideline, in portable document format (PDF), is accompanied by a list of the panel members who composed it, a detailed index of its content, recommendations for clinical trials, and the Categories of Consensus, which explain the levels of evidence and types of studies included in the references that also accompany the guideline. The guidelines are divided into treatment of cancer by site; detection, prevention, and risk reduction; and supportive care. Extensive bibliographies accompany the guidelines, attesting to the meta-analysis that the panels have performed. Navigation through the longer documents is facilitated by live links in the table of contents. The guidelines are continually updated and augmented, and the dates of each version are noted. The emphasis is on evidence derived from analyses of published studies, preferably randomized, double-blind, controlled clinical trials.

There are also guidelines for patients, in English and Spanish. Printed copies may be ordered in addition to the PDF guidelines provided on the Website. Links to clinical trial information and a physician directory, searchable by geographical area as well as by type of cancer, are available. The physician directory includes links for patients for referral and assistance (at NCCN) in locating a suitable physician. The patient material is drawn up in conjunction with the American Cancer Society and is much more in-depth and useful than the cursory treatment of health subjects found on many consumer-level Websites. The site has detailed descriptions of diagnosis, treatment, side effects of therapies, and recommendations for finding appropriate care. A Spanish-speaking colleague of the reviewer confirmed the readability and usefulness of the information.

Besides the guidelines that are the main purpose of the network,

NCCN holds an annual meeting for oncologists and, since 1977, has maintained an Outcomes Database that collects and synthesizes data for improvement in cancer care.

The NCCN Website provides a comprehensive guide to cancer for clinicians and patients. The alphabetical list of linked organizations goes from the Alliance for Lung Cancer Advocacy, Support, and Education (ALCASE) to the World Health Organization and includes every kind of cancer organization, from formal clinical discussions to advocacy groups, often with telephone numbers embedded in the entry. Except for a few international groups, all are from the United States.

The nineteen NCCN Network Hospitals are identified on a map showing locations and linking to further information. Each facility is described in detail, especially the adult and/or pediatric oncology services and availability of genetic screening or testing. As in other places on the NCCN Website, patients are encouraged to explore clinical trials. Complete referral information is provided for each hospital.

Current news stories and media links are provided, and an archive is provided with news back to the year 2000 and newsletters back to 1998. A further page lists industry and biotech advisory roundtables, with links to company Websites.

With the emphasis on evidence-based care that is increasingly being recognized as essential to medical decision making, the NCCN's compilations are a vital tool for oncologists. This reviewer's institution was a founding member of NCCN, but this review is from the librarian's point of view. If a library provides full text from the Cochrane Library or other bibliographic and full-text databases on evidence-based medicine, a link to the NCCN belongs on the list. Librarians who teach or demonstrate evidence-based medicine resources to clinicians can use the Categories of Consensus and descriptions of NCCN's research process as further

examples of how meta-analysis of controlled clinical trials is performed and how the value of original sources is analyzed.

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EndNote 7.0. Thompson ISI ResearchSoft, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104; 800.336.4474; fax 800.386.9211; Info@ISIResearchSoft.com; <http://www.endnote.com>; full CD with manual, \$299.95; full download, \$239.95; upgrade CD with manual, \$99.95; upgrade download, \$89.95.

EndNote is a citation management program popular among students, researchers, and librarians. Among the enhancements in version 7.0 is a useful new feature that allows users to keep their EndNote libraries close at hand by downloading them onto Palm operating system (OS) personal digital assistants (PDAs). EndNote software was previously reviewed in this publication in October 2000 [1], so this review

will focus on the software's new PDA functionality.

Setting up EndNote for a PDA is straightforward, because it is part of EndNote's regular installation process. If selected by the user, EndNote software is loaded on the PDA during the first HotSync after EndNote 7 has been installed on the computer.

Only one EndNote library can be stored on a PDA at a time. A library can be selected using the Configure Palm Synchronization option in EndNote's Tools menu. The selected library will be loaded on the PDA during the next HotSync, replacing the previously selected library.

EndNote for the PDA is a simplified version of the computer software allowing the basic functions of adding, editing, and deleting references directly on the handheld. It includes the same thirty-eight reference-type templates that are included in EndNote's computer version. A special PDA feature allows users to beam references to other Palm OS devices that have EndNote (Figure 1). Any changes made on the PDA will be uploaded to the EndNote library on the computer with the next HotSync. Users may configure preferences to select a default reference-type template and to determine the behavior of the PDA's scroll buttons. Users with wireless capabilities might be disappointed that EndNote's Connect function (for searching online da-

tabases and library catalogs) is not available for the PDA.

Even though the PDA's screen is small, the displays are clear and easy to read. The reference library list includes three columns: the first author's surname, year of publication, and approximately the first fifteen letters of the title (Figure 2). The list can be sorted by tapping on the desired column heading. Tapping on the column heading a second time will produce a reverse sort. All fields are included in the individual Reference display, but lengthy fields (such as abstracts, multiple author lists, and long titles) are truncated to three lines. Users must scroll through about seven screens to view an entire journal reference (Figure 3).

The biggest limitation is that EndNote was designed specifically to work with Palm hardware. There are known problems with other brands of PDAs. The reviewer successfully tested EndNote's features on a Palm m125 with 8 MB RAM running Palm OS v.4.0.1. Most functions worked properly when I tested EndNote on a Handspring Visor Pro with 16 MB RAM running Palm OS v.3.5.2H3.0, but, when I attempted to add a note to a reference, a fatal exception, requiring a hard reset, occurred. I was able to beam references back and forth between the Palm and Handspring PDAs with ease. Also, EndNote libraries cannot be stored on expansion cards. System re-

Figure 1

Add, annotate, or beam a reference with EndNote for the Palm operating system



Figure 2

Reference library display

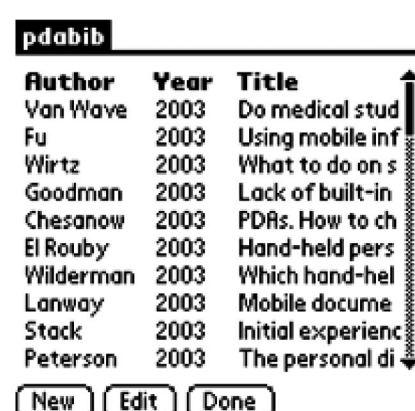


Figure 3

Reference display



quirements and limitations are clearly indicated on the EndNote Website at www.endnote.com/ENMac.asp and www.endnote.com/ENWin.asp.

Despite these limitations, EndNote for Palm OS is a useful tool for people on the move. It is easy to set up and to use. Users will find it to be a neat replacement for the

scraps of paper often used to jot down references. Students and researchers might find it handy to bring to a library when pulling references. Colleagues collaborating on projects might like the beaming capabilities. By making libraries portable, EndNote for Palm OS adds value to an already powerful citation management tool.

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Reference

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